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Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."

JOHN HAY.

On Picket Duty.

Annie Besant's lecture on "The Message of Theosophy to the Western World," which she delivered in Boston on April 27, was pitiable lunacy from beginning to end. George Francis Train's incoherencies regarding the power of the Psycho are sanity itself beside this woman's soberly uttered stultiloquence. I once heard a prominent English Individualist and Atheist rejoice over Mrs. Besant's desertion of Atheism for Theosophy on the ground that it would tend to bring discredit upon State Socialism, of which she is so prominent an apostle. After hearing her lecture, I am convinced that he was right.

The English United Chimney Sweeps' Protective Association, it seems, has a grievance which it expects Parliament to give serious consideration. As things now stand, any man of bad character or "without experience" might be employed as a sweep; which of course shows that the present system is shockingly loose. The Association wants a bill passed providing that no one shall be allowed to sweep a chimney without being registered and certificated. It is to be feared that England is not yet sufficiently enamored of "system" and "order" to pass such an excellent measure; but Gilbert and Sullivan surely may be counted upon to immortalize this remarkable incident in their next farce.

In his lecture on the *Laissez Faire* doctrine, the late Professor Thorold Rogers cited the post office as an illustration of the advantages of governmental trading and the utility of certain interferences with private enterprise. Many other economists have entertained this view of the effects of the postal monopoly which they have made to serve as a practical argument against theoretical *laissez faire*. Liberty notes with peculiar satisfaction that the boy-messenger incident, referred to in the last issue, has opened the eyes of at least one eminent and influential economist, as will be seen from the letter to the London "Times" written by Prof. Marshall which is reprinted on another page. The economic antagonists of industrial freedom will be wiser and sadder after this lesson, though the avowed State Socialists may continue to defy the facts and mislead the ignorant by absurd assertions. The "Personal Rights Journal," which is no enthusiastic convert, affirms that "the time is now ripe for a distinct assault on the *monopoly* of the post office." The English individualists are to be congratulated.

Liberty is indebted to the publisher of the "Twentieth Century" for the following exquisite piece of fiction: "'The great novel of State Socialism — "Looking Backward." When will the novel of Individualism appear?' This question has been asked thousands of times ever since the popularity of Bellamy's work was assured. Many an attempt has been made and a number of 'answers' (which did not answer) have appeared. But they were disappointing both in matter and style. When it was announced that the great English poet, William Morris, had in mind a novel embodying his sociological views, Individualists became hopeful, and their hope became joy when 'News from Nowhere' appeared. So many State Socialists have a vague idea what State Socialism really is that some of their journals hailed the work as a contribution to their literature, deceived, perhaps, by the Communistic form into which Morris cast future society. They failed to see, however, that this Communism was entirely free, and that it was a condition of *voluntary*, not military, Socialism." Any important news relating to individualism and individualists is certain to reach this office. It is strange, very strange, that we have heard nothing about the celebrations referred to in the "Twentieth Century." We are inclined to think that no individualist outside of the office of the "Twentieth Century" ever entertained any hopes or experienced any joys in connection with Morris's new book. Certain it is, at any rate, that no one who understands individualism can discover any traces of it in "News from Nowhere." Morris is no more an individualist than Oscar Wilde; both are Communists, and both are vague and unscientific. Being poets, they cannot admire military and tyrannical Socialism; and, in their ignorance of individualism, they see no alternative for society but to adopt so-called Anarchistic Communism, which is, however, a delusion and an absurdity. For the present, dreamers like Morris and Wilde content themselves with sighing and yearning and hoping and wishing for a perfect condition; but as soon as they realize that reform requires practical and systematic and scientific work, they will join the more logical and consistent, though less poetical, Communists of the Most type, and reconcile themselves to "temporary" despotism, to revolution and the forcible overthrow of the system of private property and free contract. They will decide that the only way to make men free and fraternal is to deprive them of their freedom and compel them to live like brothers — in slavery. An Anarchistic Communist is a man with too little logic to comprehend unadulterated Anarchism and too much heart to embrace harsh State Socialism. The "Twentieth Century" is not an organ of individualism; why should it be so anxious to make Pickwickian discoveries? If it wishes to print individualist news, the safest course for it would be to gather items from its individualist and Anarchist exchanges. To manufacture news is dangerous and unwise, not to say dishonest.

It appears that the editor of the dullest of all periodicals and the author of the dullest of all books, Mr. Edward Bellamy, lacks discretion and the sense of humor as well as logic and knowledge. In the "New Nation" of March 21, he has an article on "State and Citizen in Australia" which is meant to be a criticism of Professor Josiah Royce's impressions of Australia as communicated in "Scribner's." Mr. Bellamy gravely speaks of the Professor's "looseness in the use of words which is evidently the result of a corresponding looseness in thinking," a looseness which, if betrayed by an ordinary writer, would be likely to cause his logic and conclusions to be "mercilessly" overhauled by those "in authority." Professor Royce, in the "Scribner" essay, deals with the tendencies toward State Socialism in Australia and views with considerable alarm the future relation between the State — become Socialistic — and the subject. Now, Mr. Bellamy objects to the employment of the word subject in that connection. Reference to the dictionary, he avers, would show that in the scheme of a republican government the term subject has no place. Mr. Bellamy charges the Professor with the "error of regarding the State as something apart and distinct from the individual," which error is said to arise from an essentially monarchical view of government, — a view that leads many uncritical people to ignore the "fraternalism which democratic government means." "In the democratic State," Mr. Bellamy is good enough to inform Professor Royce, "we have simply these elements, — the individual on the one hand, the nation as the sum of the individuals on the other, and the organization of the community in the form of 'government' for the service of each and all. Therefore, when it is queried if there is not a danger in the 'government' doing too much for the citizen, the question is as absurd as it would be to ask if the mechanic cannot make too much use of his tools, or the man of his hands. 'Government' is but the tool of the citizen, and not a self-acting being, graciously conferring favors upon a 'subject.' Therefore it is evident that it cannot administer too much to the convenience and welfare of the public." Very well; what would Mr. Bellamy say to a proposal to force all the men and women of this democratic country to join the Roman Catholic church? According to his logic such a proposal would be entirely proper and rational. Since the right of a given individual to espouse Catholicism is undenied and undeniable, the right of the State to coerce its individual units to that end must be equally sacred and indisputable. The question if there is not a violation of individual liberty in the State forcing a person to join a certain church is (according to Mr. Bellamy) as absurd as the question if a citizen cannot without danger to his own liberty do this or that legitimate thing. Yet Mr. Bellamy is emphatic in the affirmation of the right of the individual to choose his own religion. But individual rights cannot possibly have any significance if the State is not something apart and distinct from the individual. In denying the right of the State to coerce a citizen in the matter of religion, Mr. Bellamy tacitly admits that the individual has rights which the State is bound to respect and that there *is* danger in the State doing too much, or attempting to do too much, for the individual. And this admission, it is needless to say, is fatal to the shallow notion that government is the tool of the citizen. How can it be a tool when it may come into conflict with the citizen? He must be ignorant indeed who does not know that democracy means the rule of the majority, and not the rule of all. The rule of all is the rule of none. In the true democratic State, the majority decides what is good for the whole nation, and the government carries out the decision of the majority. The minority is completely at the mercy of the majority, and enjoys no rights or privileges save those the majority sees fit to allow it. Will Mr. Bellamy say now, after he has been informed of the nature of democratic government, that such a government cannot administer too much to the welfare of the nation? If the majority is to govern itself solely by its own definition of public welfare, it is evident that the minority has no more liberty than the subjects or slaves of a tyrant who governs himself by his notions of what the welfare of his subjects requires. If those that are ruled are the subjects of those that rule, then are those in the minority the subjects of the majority. What becomes of the "fraternalism" of democratic government? Who is really guilty of loose thinking and absurd writing, Professor Royce or Edward Bellamy?

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"In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestiges of old-time slavery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the sword of the executioner, the seal of the magistrate, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the exciseman, the erasing-knife of the department clerk, all those insignia of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel." — PROUDHON.

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Equal Liberty versus Prohibition.

It seems to the "Voice," I learn, that in my last response to it I have fairly turned tail on the argument and run away from it. There is nothing for me to do except to assure the "Voice" that it has fallen into an illusion and to recommend it a second and more careful study of my points. Such a proceeding, too, may lead the "Voice" to realize the groundlessness of its charge that, in defending myself against the imputation of logical incapacity, I have repeated in another form the logical offence of circular reasoning. The readers of the "Voice" are misled into the belief that I had attempted to refute the case of the prohibitionists by arguing thus: "I am strictly within my right in wishing to buy or sell a drink. To prohibit me from doing this is to violate equal liberty." Why did the "Voice" omit to quote the few brief sentences that accompanied and proved the assertion? Here is what I said and what the "Voice" has neglected to meet:

Didn't you admit yourself that, "if A wants a drink and B sells it to him," "no one is wronged if A does not drink to excess"? That admission disposes of your case. I am strictly within my right in wishing to buy or sell a drink. To prohibit me from doing this is to violate equal liberty. What right have you, or the government, to *assume* that I will drink to excess and commit a crime? Does everybody who drinks drink to excess and commit crimes? No. Then it is a crime to prohibit men from buying and selling intoxicants, and prohibition is a violation of equal liberty. *Some* men, you cry, drink to excess and commit crimes, but this has nothing to do with me. Is my liberty to be violated because other men misbehave? Nobody objects to your punishing the criminal, be he drunk or sober. And this is all that equal liberty warrants you in doing.

Is this reasoning in a circle? The major premise is that men are entitled to equal liberty and are to be punished only for wrongdoing or for violations of equal liberty. The minor premise is that A wrongs no one if he buys a drink from B. Is it not a legitimate inference that the government, in denying the inoffensive A the right to buy a drink, punishes him unjustly and is itself guilty of violating equal liberty? If the "Voice" cannot see that it is, I can only suggest that it would do well to learn from some school book the common doctrine of the syllogism.

But, in truth, the "Voice" is only feigning simplicity. It knows well enough that I have succeeded in demonstrating the impropriety of prohibition from the standpoint of equal liberty, and it is getting ready to repudiate that scientific social law. Realizing that the equal liberty principle is absolutely fatal to prohibition, it seeks to introduce a new "guiding principle," as will be seen from the following extract:

If it is a man's right to sell liquor, where does he get that right? "Trade is a social act." Barter and sale are possible only under some form of social organization. At every step of the way traffic appeals to Government for protection. Is Government under obligation to protect all forms, or has it the right to decide whether or not it shall grant the protection? When a man begins the sale of liquor he begins, of necessity, to entice to drunkenness some members of the community, and drunkenness itself is a crime against society and a precursor of many more serious crimes. This enticement to drunkenness and violence is an inseparable part of the business of liquor selling. The question as it reaches the Government is simply whether it shall grant the protection of its courts, its police, its legislatures, its army to a form of traffic whose evil results on the persons and property of others (to protect which is government's very first duty) are so utterly disproportionate to any benefits conferred.

To those who adhere to equal liberty nothing is plainer than that the government is bound "to protect all forms" except those that constitute violations of equal liberty. The government cannot, without itself becoming a criminal, refuse protection to legitimate activities, and everything is legitimate which does not necessarily involve a violation of equal liberty. The "Voice" admits that "if A wants a drink and B sells it to him," "no one is wronged if A does not drink to excess," and this admission is all that is required to establish my right to buy or sell a drink. Buying or selling a drink does not constitute a violation of equal liberty, and the government has no right to assume that I will drink to excess and become violent. It only has the right to punish me for actual criminal acts. The believers in equal liberty cannot accept the proposition that "drunkenness itself is a crime against society," and those who accept it clearly betray an exceedingly imperfect grasp of the principle of equal liberty. But even if the proposition that drunkenness is a crime could be shown to be a logical deduction from the principle of equal liberty, the case of the prohibitionists would gain nothing thereby. Not everybody who drinks drinks to excess, and my right to buy a drink cannot be denied me because somebody for whom I am in no way responsible will lay himself liable to just punishment by yielding to temptation.

The sooner the "Voice" satisfies itself that it cannot faithfully serve both prohibition and equal liberty the better it will be for everybody concerned. Since we cannot agree, let us at least know just where we differ. As believers in equal liberty we cannot justify prohibition, which the "Voice" is led to advocate through the adoption of another "guiding principle," or, rather, the failure to recognize any guiding principle. For it says: "So far as any 'guiding principle' is concerned, to enable the majority to decide what forms of traffic it shall protect and what forms it shall prohibit, it is no more possible definitely to lay down any such principle than it is in the ordinary transactions of life, where judgment is to be exercised. It is a question of proportions — proportion between the injuries and benefits. . . . This does not imply that the attitude of the Government is a mere matter of caprice; but that it is and ever must be a matter of judgment, and all sound judgment must be based on facts." For my part, while I agree that "all sound judgment must be based on facts," and that "it is a question of proportion between the injuries and the benefits," I dissent from the conclusion that it is impossible to lay down any guiding principle. In equal liberty I find a scientific guiding principle, a principle based on facts and warranted by a due and intelligent regard for the consideration of proportion between the injuries and the benefits accruing from the different social policies. *My* appeal to facts has determined my vote for the principle of equal liberty, and I insist that individuals as well as majorities and governments must respect and carry out that principle. I decline to accept the opinion of the majority and the lessons which it draws from the facts. At the same time I acknowledge that the majority, if it is not certain of the validity of the equal liberty principle, must continue to govern itself by such notions as it has been able to form. I cannot prevent the majority from enforcing prohibition if it imagines that measure to be conducive to social peace and order; but I can prevent it from claiming that prohibition is sanctioned by equal liberty. I am not physically strong enough to resist and disable the majority, but I am intellectually strong enough to convict it of absurdity and inconsistency. If the "Voice" had not pretended to follow the guidance of equal liberty, I should not have raised the points that I have relied on. I am glad to have forced the "Voice" to repudiate the principle of equal liberty, and only ask it to express, frankly and explicitly, its distrust of that principle. After that I shall be ready to resume the floor and reason with the "Voice" on the question of equal liberty. V. Y.

Corrupt Government and the People.

A Philadelphia Unitarian minister preached a sermon on the present political corruption, which the New York "Sun" summarizes as follows:

According to this preacher, this republic is in a deplorable condition morally and politically; words can hardly describe the existing turpitude and the frightful degradation. It is a condition, he says, "never surpassed in the depths to which public morals have descended." He is "almost overpowered" "with the sense of the extremity of the degradation to which things have come in the management of our political affairs." He is bowed down with shame as he contemplates "the never surpassed venality, dishonesty, vulgarity, political profligacy, and in many cases personal debauchery, which mark the class of men, who, through trickery of the basest and most flagrant character, cheap, gross, and scarcely cloaked," "have possessed themselves of the real power which our institutions, in form, distribute through the mass of the citizens." The State has become "the prey and the sport of a class as infamous, in the sight of every true man, as any robber baron or condottiere of the fifteenth century"; "men of low origin, ignorant men; destitute of the commonest refinements: vulgar, illiterate, the dregs of our population."

All this is unquestionably true; but the "Sun" attempts to show that it cannot possibly be true, arguing thus:

If this is true, if we are really as bad and as badly off as that, we are near the end of our career as an organized society and a civilized nation. No society so rotten can last much longer. It must fall to pieces and the light of its civilization go out entirely. In this republic the people are the Government, and if the Government is utterly corrupt, it is because the people are lost in corruption. Politicians can accomplish nothing unless they are in accord with the popular sentiment. If the degradation exists, it is not the degradation of a class, but of the majority of the people. The whole country is rotten, if he preaches truly. It is going straight to the devil, for he finds such moral and political decay in all parts of the Union. Government by the people is a failure, unless this Unitarian minister lies.

And the "Sun" concludes by asking with an air of confidence and satisfaction:

Now, is that really the condition of things in this republic, so peaceful, so orderly, so prosperous, and so unexampled in the rapidity of its growth? Or is the Philadelphia preacher a slanderer of his countrymen and a defamer of his country?

But let us test the strength of the "Sun's" argument, which, in effect, is that, if the minister's charges be true, three things follow, — namely, that our society cannot last much longer and must fall to pieces; that the degradation and the corruption characteristic of the government must also be characteristic of the majority of the people; and that popular government is a failure. Well, and what if popular government is really a failure? Is there any occasion for despair in that fact? We certainly need not revert to despotic Monarchy; nor is there any danger of social chaos and civil war. Why not try freedom, a state of equal liberty? Again: granting that a society so rotten as ours cannot last much longer, it does not follow that it must go to pieces. We can save it by applying the needful remedies. We can deprive all the debased and prostituted politicians of their occupations and reduce them to the rank of plain citizens. We can make them harmless by refusing to pay them for meddling with our affairs. We can abolish democratic tyranny and abide by the principle of equal liberty, under which men will severally reap the reward of their conduct and be compelled to recognize that honesty is the best policy. As to the inference that the majority of the people are necessarily corrupt and

degraded, it is not logically drawn. The majority of the people are not corrupt, but they are too busy and too ignorant to estimate the worth of politicians and officials. The majority of the people are obliged to work for a living and to respect each other's rights. The politicians are made a privileged class and given unlimited opportunity for fraud and tyranny; no wonder they become debased. Not every man is a tyrant; but there are few men who, if made absolute rulers of men, would not soon learn to play the tyrant and to like power. The majority of the people are not corrupt. Give them equal liberty and opportunity, and they will prosper. At present they live under a system as iniquitous as it is irrational; and things are in a pretty bad state. But they will sooner or later open their eyes and turn over a new leaf. They will declare popular government a failure, and resolve to try freedom.

V. Y.

The Latest Excuse for Government.

Some time ago Lester F. Ward, of Washington, issued a pamphlet called "False Notions of Government," in which he defends government with the strenuousness of a State Socialist. In it he takes two positions which require consideration from the Anarchist. One is that a republican form of government is a thing entirely different from governments of the past, and that those who oppose government *per se* make the great blunder of confounding the nature of a "representative government" with that of past governments. The other is that government, whose primary function has been to protect society against physical encroachments, shall "reclothe itself" and protect society against that "psychical invasion" which is a modern phenomenon. "The large masses of wealth," he says, "are made to flow toward certain centres of accumulation through the action of the unregulated rule of mind."

In answer to his first point, there is no essential difference in any forms of government. All governments are based upon compulsion, the only difference being in the number who wield the power.

If we imagine society consisting of twenty persons, to say that when one man governs the other nineteen there is despotism, but that when eleven govern the nine there is no despotism, is irrational. A difference in numbers cannot affect a principle. The Anarchist, while recognizing thoroughly the difference in form, and the expanded power, nevertheless maintains that forms of government are only forms of despotism; that government, *the thing itself*, is the instrument whereby the spontaneity of the members of society is cramped; that government, whether it be aristocratic or democratic, is a machine whereby privileges are granted and ancient practices perpetuated.

It is necessary, however, for Mr. Ward to defend the majority principle in order to have an instrument by which to regulate the "unregulated rule of mind."

Now to the second point. The great mistake so often made by men of various schools — and Mr. Ward is a striking example of this class — is to assume that unjust distribution and consequent poverty are due to unrestricted competition. Even popular writers of the school of Spencer write of the "wonderful progress Western civilization has made and is making under unrestricted competition," and on the next page point out wholesale State interference!

The truth is that, instead of enjoying unrestricted competition, we have a species of hybridism, — a mixture of Anarchism and State Socialism. To say that competition is unrestricted, when such glaring monopolies as the present land and monetary systems exist (which were inaugurated and are perpetuated by the State), is to make one's self ridiculous. Instead of advocating protection against psychical invasion, it is first necessary to prove that economic ills are due to psychical invasion. To say that "the great evils under which society now labors have grown up *during* the progress of intellectual supremacy" does not prove that the evils are *due* to intellectual supremacy. The fact is, these glaring inequalities are not due to psychical invasion, but can be traced to the very agent he invokes to remedy them, — the State.

Wm. Trinkaus.

The Objection to Property in Ideas.

Referring to Mr. Tucker's comments on my article in the last issue, no very extended remarks seem to be necessary in reply.

It is, perhaps, natural for Mr. Tucker to retort that, to those who read Tak Kak "understandingly," something more than assertions is revealed in his opposition to property in ideas. Nevertheless the (absurd) implication that I am either unwilling or unable to do justice to Tak Kak's argumentation has not the slightest tendency to wound my *amour propre*, and I will content myself with the simple statement that it is not my habit to ignore weighty considerations or telling points advanced by my opponents. Without wishing to be dramatic or needlessly sober, I may yet say that, in the pending controversy, as in others, I am interested in the abstract logical truth alone, and that I could not, even if I would, resort to any dishonorable trickery. Tak Kak, I repeat, has made no argument to show the inconsistency alleged to subsist between property in ideas and equal liberty. It may be "impolitic" to say so, — though I can't see why, — but I fear that, with the exception of Mr. Lloyd, none of the participants in this battle anywhere manifested a decided disposition to be guardedly politic.

In defending himself against the charge of question-begging, Mr. Tucker leaps from the frying pan into the fire. He explains that, in speaking of "the world's" literary treasure, he meant simply treasures in possession of the world. Though I cannot truthfully claim "to know" the difference between possession and ownership (and Mr. Tucker's confidence here is rather amusing, seeing that volumes have been written to define these terms and the end is not yet), nevertheless I may, in a general way, grant the reality of the distinction. The assumption that the world possesses the treasures granted, Mr. Tucker argues that property in ideas does not make for happiness, since it might lead to dispossessing the world of some of its treasures. But here too we have a plain case of question-begging. The assumption that the possession of the treasures makes for the world's happiness is precisely what I deny. Having agreed to use equal liberty as a test, the only way to determine whether a given thing or course makes for the world's happiness is to fix its relation to equal liberty. Nothing makes for happiness which is possessed or pursued in violation of equal liberty. This proposition is involved in the premise. What we are seeking just now to determine is whether the world possesses the treasures in obedience to, or violation of, equal liberty. Till that is settled, we are without any data to base any conclusion on with regard to the good or bad effects of the possession of the treasures, and for Mr. Tucker to say that the possession of the treasures makes for the world's happiness is to beg the question.

That the soundness of an argument is in any way dependent on the physical power or skill which enables the author to enforce it, is surprising news to me. The thief, to prove that the possession of the stolen coat makes for his happiness, has to prove that stealing is compatible with equal liberty, — that, and nothing more.

I do not think that Mr. Tucker correctly estimates the conditions of happiness when he affirms that the destruction of Spencer's works would amount to a great social calamity. But I do not care to argue this point. Each must think it out for himself. It is true that a book does not exist, in a "vital sense," if it is not actively in the market; but there is an immense difference, all the same, between total destruction and existence even in a non-vital sense. Even total destruction would not be a great social calamity, much less can partial destruction be so described.

Mr. Tucker objects to my interpolation of the parenthetical clause, "or, at all events cripple," in reproducing Mr. Bilgram's statement respecting the effect of denial of property in ideas. This interpolation he deems a sufficient ground for a charge of inaccuracy and unfairness. But I am perfectly sure that the qualification was not repugnant to Mr. Bilgram's real meaning. Mr. Tucker is much too literal in his interpretations of his opponent's expressions. Mr. Bilgram does not think, I am convinced, that non-recognition of property in ideas would really and absolutely destroy literature. Mr. Bilgram knows that, copyright or no copyright, reformers would continue to write, and that exceptionally wealthy men of science would publish the fruits of their leisurely studies. But that would not be literature in "any vital sense." Spencer has himself related the story of his struggles, and it is pretty plain that in the utter absence of copyright Spencer's works would never have seen the light. Before Mr. Tucker pushes his charge of unfairness, let him interrogate Mr. Bilgram and ascertain which of us has grasped his real meaning.

Now I come to the most important part of Mr. Tucker's reply. The first thing to be noted concerning it is that Mr. Tucker seems still confused as to the cause of our present quarrel. I have not measured "the ground disputed in the battle over property in ideas," and am not interested in the practical successes or failures of authors. I am discussing the question of copyright in the abstract, and contend for property in ideas within limits sanctioned by equal liberty. I am prepared to make "enormous admissions" in the most cheerful manner, provided it is clearly shown that equal liberty necessitates them. It is true that, prior to the discovery by Mr. Tucker of the sole apparently rational objection to universal property in ideas, I contended for universality; but the introduction of the "settler" appeared to justify an "admission," — whether enormous or not, I cared not, — which accordingly I hastened to make. I may yet decide to withdraw the admission; for the present, I am satisfied to let it stand, frankly acknowledging the seeming reasonableness of Mr. Tucker's objection — as far as it may be reasonably applied. But Mr. Tucker's intense delight with his discovery makes him blind to its true proportions and causes him to claim for it a significance which the impartial and logical bystander must refuse to attribute to it. No amount of irony and ridicule and dust can submerge and efface the important distinction which I drew between those cases where men find themselves deprived of the right to authorship and those where men voluntarily and deliberately part with that right. Mr. Tucker chooses to put a conveniently literal construction upon my expressions, "goes out of his way" and "stops to study," and then proceeds to draw distinctions some of which are indeed childish in the extreme. But I cannot take notice of such unjustifiable distinctions. The reader who realizes that the only objection Mr. Tucker has been able to put forward against property in ideas is that the man who discovers something thereby takes away the liberty of others to discover the same thing, may be depended on to perceive that this objection cannot be applied, for instance, to the case of a man who purchases a book and reads it with the intention of learning the new truths it contains. In other words, he will clearly see that the objection is inadequate as an argument against all property in ideas, and he will politely refuse to accept Mr. Tucker's view on the matter of patent and copyright. As for the simple, every-day liberty to read books, there is no such right in existence. If men had the right to read books, they would not be obliged to pay for them. Men have the right to exchange their commodities or services against the commodities of such parties as may be willing to deal with them. When a man purchases a commodity, he is at liberty to use it in any way consistent with equal liberty. A man who has bought a book has the right to read it, lend it, burn it, in short put it to any use or abuse which does not jeopardize the rights of his fellows. Whether he may, consistently with equal liberty, multiply copies of the book and sell them, is the question at issue.

But my distinction makes property in ideas begin at an uncertain degree of complexity or at an uncertain degree of concealment! Well, what of it? I am discussing the question in the abstract, and, finding a distinction to exist, I cannot but call attention to it. Let Mr. Tucker advance an objection which should cover the whole ground, if he can. It is not my fault that his objection cannot be applied to all cases. Surely Mr. Tucker does not mean to say that my distinction cannot be real *because* it makes property in ideas begin at an uncertain degree of complexity or concealment. Mr. Tucker has repeatedly admitted that it is impossible to define the limits of liberty and the nature of invasion, that we cannot draw a hard and fast line between the field of legitimate activities and the field of activities constituting infringements of equal liberty. From the fact that it is impossible to determine whether certain acts are invasive or not, it surely does not follow that we must either pronounce *all* acts legitimate or hold them all equally illegitimate. We do not know just where invasion begins, nevertheless there is such a thing as invasion. Similarly, there is a distinction between ideas properly classed as private property and ideas properly classed as public property, — that is, if Mr. Tucker's objection to universal property in ideas be really strong and valid as far as it goes.

The fact that the distinction involves questions of detail which no jury could intelligently decide in accordance with the principle of equal liberty tells as much against Mr. Tucker's position as it does against mine. Because it would be difficult to decide questions arising under the distinction, says Mr. Tucker, let us once for all declare against property in ideas. With equal propriety, or impropriety, I might say that, in view of the practical difficulties, the best course is to recognize property in all ideas and disregard that abstract right to authorship for which Mr. Tucker contends.

I have not condemned Mr. Tucker or Tak Kak for empiricism. So long as they argue against property in ideas from the standpoint of equal liberty, no such condemnation can justly be administered. I simply protest against the needless burdening of the argument with empirical observations which we all must hold to be inconsequential. Mr. Tucker has not the faintest shadow of an excuse for accusing me of empiricism, for I have all along held to the principle of equal liberty.

Mr. Tucker's reference to my article in the last issue as "the fifth and longest of a series of articles the third of which was the 'probably final' one" betrays irritation; is he tired of this controversy? For my part, I see no reason for not continuing it until one or the other side admits that it "can advance nothing more that is new or strong."

V. Y.

[Whether or not I have anything more to advance that is new or strong is a question that will not be settled until occasion arises for such advancement. No such occasion is presented by Mr. Yarros's article, which, far from advancing anything new or strong, is

simply a reiteration of its author's previously-exposed weaknesses, coupled with some fresh inaccuracies, not to say unfairnesses, in the statement of my position, which any intelligent reader can detect by carefully comparing my last article with Mr. Yarros's rejoinder. It is unprofitable to discuss longer with an opponent who has become so inexact that he refuses to allow literal construction of words which he uses, not in metaphor, not in embellishment, not in any turn of rhetoric, but in a central sentence written to establish the pivot of his position. It is also unprofitable, except as it develops the faculty of patience and the muscles of the hand and the wrist, to engage in a struggle for supremacy in the art of reiterating arguments upon paper with the greatest possible frequency and volume. This is an accomplishment in which I prefer to admit my inferiority at once. The discussion of property in ideas between Mr. Yarros and myself is now closed. My opponent has had the last word, and he is welcome to it. I do not think that copyright has ever been defended more ably or more stubbornly. In its defence Mr. Yarros has marshalled every consideration that could be urged with any show of reason, besides several to which reason gives no color at all. If he has failed, — and, so far as I know it, such is the nearly unanimous verdict of the readers of Liberty, — the fault is not with the champion, but with his hopeless cause. — EDITOR LIBERTY.]

The reviewer of "A Plea for Liberty" in the Boston "Literary World," among other things, decent, bad, and indifferent, has this to say: "In the papers we have mentioned, as in Mr. Spencer's introduction, there are, however, numerous signs that we are listening to British, not to American, individualists. Mr. Mackay's preface speaks of the 'Free Library Agitators who would make their own favorite form of recreation a charge on the rates'; Mr. Spencer waxes eloquent over the 'tyrannical system which compels poor people to receive that which, with papal assumption, the State calls education.' We are thus prepared for the diatribes of the Rev. B. H. Alford on 'Free Education,' and Mr. M. D. O'Brien on 'Free Libraries.' The latter objects to novel-reading when made a luxury for the people by means of public libraries, and paid for out of the rates. Book-readers, as 'one special section of the community,' should not be favored 'at the expense of all the rest.' We are gratified to learn, therefore, that 'every successful opposition to Free Libraries is a stroke for human advancement,' as they are 'a demoralizing and pauperizing institution.' Free education, according to Mr. Alford, discourages the discipline of home. Another writer discovers that the money which should be spent for school fees goes into tobacco, drink, and dress. These arguments are amusing in this country. All the writers in this volume, indeed, would have been profited by a study of American institutions. They pay little attention to the social and economic changes in England, which democracy renders inevitable, some of which, indeed, as in the case of schools and libraries, are safeguards of liberty. The insular note is strongly marked in all the essays. . . . Mr. Donisthorpe's principle of appealing to history should teach all of them, however, that a century of democracy in these United States is worthy of their notice. We have followed a *via media* which the Socialist and the Individualist alike would do well to study." Are there, then, no writers and thinkers in this country with views as radical as those of the British individualists? Has Spencer no followers and disciples here, and are there no American philosophical Anarchists who have "profited by a study of American institutions"? There are in this country many people, alas! to whom the arguments in the "Plea for Liberty" are "amusing"; but it is precisely for such that the book has been written. The reviewer is either ignorant of the intellectual movements of his own country, or else he is shallow and prejudiced enough to imagine that he can injure the American radical individualists by ignoring their existence and activity.

Herbert Vivian, editor of the whilom "Whirlwind," has presented himself to "the free and independent electors of East Bradford," England, for their suffrages as their representative in Parliament. He calls himself a "Revisionist candidate," and his platform is such a novelty in politics and on the whole so commendable that I give it in full. "I advocate the revision of the constitution, including the repeal of all religious disabilities; the revision of our representative system, to give the People, — by means of *plebiscites*, proportional representation, and frequent parliaments, — a more complete control over their own affairs; the revision of taxes, to reduce those burdens to their narrowest limits and to establish them as far as possible upon a voluntary basis; and the general revision of the statute-book, to obliterate all traces of Socialistic legislation. I desire the resurrection of political economy, that bogie-man of modern agitators. I preach fanatically the gospel of individualism, according to John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer. The first principle of this gospel is that every one must be allowed to do whatever he pleases, so long as his doing so does not interfere with the liberty of others to do the same. I am a staunch Free Trader, desiring the abolition of that curse of civilization, the custom-house; I protest against all monopolies, whether exercised by unwieldy State departments or by grasping individuals; and I support the claims of all nationalities to the management of their own affairs. I come before you also as a labor candidate, yielding to no man in my sympathy for the People and desiring above all to confer upon them the priceless boon of Liberty. I am one of those who prefer to see England free than England made sober, virtuous, or tidy by the fussy intervention of 'our grandmother, the State.' I look to the beneficent action of Trades Unions for the settlement of all disputes between capital and labor and for securing to the workers shorter hours, higher wages, and all their reasonable demands. I shall always resist the establishment and continuance of class privileges, and I look to the revision of the land laws as an effective solution of the problems of poverty." Mr. Vivian has yet to learn that revision of the money laws is quite as much needed as revision of the land laws, and that the banking monopoly is the most pernicious violation of individualism from which the world suffers.

"The Freethinkers' Magazine" for May contains a frontispiece portrait of Josephine Aldrich, and her life sketch by Prof. A. L. Rawson; "The Evolution of the Devil," by Henry Frank; "Bradlaugh," by Holyoake; "Law," by Prof. Herbert E. Croswell; "Spiritualism," by Lyman C. Howe; "The Bible," by Dr. Westbrook; and "Heresy and Heretics," by Matilda Joslyn Gage.

Plumb-Line Pointers.

Last Sunday (April 5) a petition for the closing of the World's Fair on Sunday was circulated in the churches in Iowa and, I presume, elsewhere. The pastors had been requested to preach on this particular day in favor of the petition. Of course they did so, for are they not all in the ecclesiastical trades union? The petition was numerously signed, — by the church members, by the Epworth League adolescents and their recruits, and by the Sunday school innocents, — still more youthful and unbending. It were credulously foolish to suppose that these children knew what they were doing. An Epworth Leaguer of fifteen, — a girl active in the society, who signed it, said, when cross-questioned, that she "heard them talking about it"; she thought that they said people "should not work on the Sabbath," and that was the extent of her information. And she is the type of tens of thousands of others whose names Wilbur Crafts will parade in his next report as the names of citizens opposed to the "desecration of the Sabbath" by the opening of the Columbian Exposition on that day. It does not seem to have occurred to the dupes who affixed their signatures to this petition that it was just as "wicked" to circulate such a paper on the "Sabbath" as it would be to "work" or visit the Exposition. And neither did the dupes have the wit to perceive that they were asked to abstain from work and recreation on Sunday, and to help force others to abstain, by men who earn nearly their whole livelihood by services on the "sacred" day of recuperation. Of course, they did not see the equally indisputable fact that the preacher would be powerless to steal the seventh of our time were it not for his congener, the politician. The Church may rave and plead by turns; it may enter all the special pleas that casuistry can construct and raise all the false issues that hypocrisy can invent, but it cannot close the Exposition on Sunday. Only the State can do that. When "Secularists" realize this truth and all that it implies, there will be a complete reorganization of the forces of Freethought.

Woman's dependence upon man, in an economic sense, is the basic evil of our social life. Wherever one healthy adult depends upon another or others for subsistence, there is maladjustment and, eventually, corruption, antagonism, misery. Health of mind, and health of body, each presupposes exercise proportioned to strength, adequate in amount, and sufficient in compensation, to furnish ample support to the individual. Government fastens millions of parasites upon the body of labor, and familyism, in all the upper ranks of society, does the same evil and deadly thing.

An editorial correspondent of "Lucifer," writing over the initial L., says: "In free love woman will not be driven or forced into relations that are distasteful to her." In the next paragraph this correspondent says, — in defiant contradiction of the first quoted utterance, — "When woman is queen in the realm of love, she will not be a free lover, simply because it is an impossibility." In other words, in free love woman would be free, would be queen of herself, but, when she is queen, she will not be a free lover, *i. e.*, she will be "driven or forced into relations that are distasteful to her." Or, to put it in a slightly different way, — in free love woman would have control of herself, but, when she becomes queen, she will refuse to be a free lover, she will elect to be "driven or forced." This raises the question: How can one be queen when she is driven or forced into relations that are distasteful to her? What a pity it is that so many good-intentioned people permit themselves to appear in print before they have learned the value of words and their proper relations to each other!

It is claimed by the advocates of State education that the people, if not forced to support schools, would degenerate into illiteracy. In an open letter to Secretary of State McFarland, of Iowa, who recently made a bitter attack upon the Bohemians, Professor B. Shimeh of the State University incidentally furnishes us with a fact bearing upon the educational problem. Says Professor Shimeh: "The charge of ignorance and illiteracy certainly should not be made against a people who have supported a system of schools in their own country for years by voluntary subscriptions in the face of the opposition of the Austrian government, and who, when they come to this country, gladly support our schools and avail themselves of their advantages as far as their means permit.

The representatives of the Farmers' Alliance in convention at Ocala acted fully in accord with the purpose for which the organization came into existence, when they advised their constituency to withdraw their support from such papers as are in league with the gigantic monopolies that are destroying the homes and happiness of the producing masses. As to the resolution against opening the Columbian Exposition on Sundays — this I do NOT approve. Expositions, Fairs, Libraries, Theatres, etc., are institutions that should be kept open on Sundays more so than on any other day of the week. Is this satisfactory, Mr. Walker? — *Northern Light, Tacoma, Wash.*

Well, hardly. What gives life and power and immunity to those "gigantic monopolies"? The State, beyond doubt. What is the attitude of the Alliance toward the State? Would it curtail or extend its powers? The latter, assuredly. What has the farmer or any other laborer to gain by an extension of the dominion of his arch-enemy? Does the history of governments justify any reasonable person in expecting that the putting of morals, industry, finance, and commerce more completely under the control of government will inure to the benefit of those who honestly earn their living? Can Mr. Galirni himself answer this question in the affirmative? And if not — as I respect his mentality enough to think that he cannot and will not — what does he think the farmers will gain by refusing to read all sides of all questions? And if they cannot read the organs of the political parties which oppose *their* political party, what will they do with the Anarchistic journals which wage unrelenting war against *all* political parties, and especially against the so-called "People's Party," which they antagonize more sharply than the Republican and Democratic parties because it is more paternalistic, therefore more dangerous to liberty, than the Republican and Democratic parties?

How nicely the State does its work when it attempts, or pretends to attempt, to help the agricultural producer and the wage laborer, the single-tax paper of Lawrence, Kansas, "The Jeffersonian," indicates in this paragraph:

The Santa Fe railroad having promoted one of its conductors to be railroad commissioner, there is now not one lawyer on the board. That railroad already owned Geo. T. Anthony, who it promoted from being its Mexican freight agent to the board several years ago. What a farce and mockery are the Kansas Labor Bureau and the Board of Labor Commissioners!

Mrs. J. Ellen Foster, in her address before the Woman's Council at Washington, said: "Our creed is as it always was — total abstinence for the individual and prohibition for the State, following as a logical consequence." Where did Mrs. Foster study the elements of logic? Where is the logical connection between the voluntary abstinence of one individual and the enforced abstinence of another? Suppose that a Catholic priest should say to the lawyer, C. Ellen Foster: "I am a Catholic by my own free choice; therefore,

as a logical consequence, the State has the right to compel you to be a Catholic." What would be Mrs. Foster's answer? Would she not be very likely to say: "You must be a fool or take me to be one?" And yet the supposititous "logic" of the priest would be worth precisely as much as the "logic" of Mrs. Foster, when advocating prohibition, — that is, absolutely nothing.

Says a "labor reform" patent-inside sheet:

The moral argument in favor of compulsory voting is a strong one. Those who object to the plan have done so mainly on the untenable ground that to cast a ballot is not an abstract and absolute duty of the citizen. This is not true. There is no public duty which is more imperative than that of voting. There is none that can take precedence of it, and there is nothing that can excuse the citizen for neglecting it.

If it is the "duty" of the citizen to vote, it is equally his duty to vote "right." Any argument which will justify a compulsory voting law will also justify such a framing of it as will compel the citizen to vote as the majority desire. Else the law would defeat the purpose of those who invoke its aid. "It is the duty of A to vote," say the injected righteousness people. If he will not voluntarily vote, *make* him vote. But suppose that next year he, with a sufficient number of other citizens to make a majority, vote to repeal the compulsory voting law; what then? Why, the next year he stays away from the polls again! Manifestly, the only possible security is to compel him to vote for the continuance of the law. But this would necessitate an *open* ballot, and to such a ballot the advocates of the Australian ballot are necessarily opposed. But, as far as my observation extends, the advocates of the compulsory voting law and of the Australian ballot are the same people. How are they going to work to "consist" with themselves?

E. C. WALKER.

Monopoly and the Post Office.

[Prof. Marshall in the London Times.]

I think that the chief dangers of Socialism lie not in its tendency towards a more equal distribution of incomes, for I can see no harm in that, but in its sterilizing influence on those mental activities which have gradually raised the world from barbarism, and have made the average English working man of today really richer than the average Englishman was not long ago. The character of Post Office business is such that we might expect *à priori* that there, at least, Socialism would not perceptibly tend towards lethargy. But experience has shown otherwise. In most other kinds of business the producer anticipates the wants of the consumer, and invents new ways of satisfying them; in postal affairs alone the consumer has to clamor long before he gets the most simple and obvious reforms; and, indeed, in spite of his special facilities for clamoring, on which the apologist of the Post Office justly insists, he often does not get them at all. Private enterprise makes few improvements in business neighboring on that of the Post Office, because the Post Office, slothful in many directions, is vigorous only in this, — that when private persons are inclined to invest their time and capital in an attempt to think out new ideas for the public benefit, the Post Office warns them to desist, and hinders them; and, if they still persist, at last appropriates to itself one part of their idea by offering to the public a poor substitute, while the greater part is lost to the world. The Post Office gains little, while the inventors are robbed; the germs of contrivances that might ultimately have revolutionized our means of communication are destroyed; and we secure, so far as the influence of the Post Office reaches, most of the evils of Socialism with but few of its benefits. . . .

The semi-official apology for the recent action of the Post Office cannot fail to have a permanent place in economic history. The ability with which it is written renders only more eloquent its unconscious testimony to the danger of allowing a government department any artificial advantages in competition with private enterprise. The writer appeals to general experience in support of the "axiom that a government monopoly of posts and telegraphs is for the good of the community." This begs the whole question. It may be conceded that postal business suffers less from being under a government monopoly than any other, except some affairs of local concern, such as water supply. For every negligence of the common postman is as patent to the persons injured by it, and, therefore, to their representatives in Parliament and the press, as the sluggishness of dockyard officials is concealed from all critical eyes. And, further, the advantages of centralization and "production on a large scale" are notoriously greater in Post Office business than anywhere else. For these reasons there has been a general agreement that the State should be allowed to undertake postal business; but its further claim to have a monopoly of that business has been acquiesced in *per incuriam* rather than admitted as the result of careful scientific inquiry. It may fairly be argued that if the State, with its enormous advantages for this particular business, can be undersold by private competitors, the reason must be either that it is extending its claims to the possession of business in regions where its special advantages fail, and where, therefore, there is no good reason for having the work done by a government department with or without a monopoly, or else that it shows a grievous want of enterprise.

A Deadlock.

To the Editor of Liberty:

Notwithstanding your discouraging remarks on my last letter, I cannot refrain from saying at least a few words.

I had proposed to base our arguments on three axioms of which we are conscious by experience only, and, after showing that the proposition known as "The Law of Equal Freedom" is a deduction therefrom, I had asked if you accept still other axiomatical results of observation from which you derive your conclusions. In answer I am told that a generalization from known and long observed phenomena seems to have no value for me as a guide, etc.

By endorsing Henry George's dogmatical assertion that property in concrete things is a natural right while that in ideas is an artificial attempt to share our bounties, you postulated such a radical difference between the two forms of ownership that a discussion with parallel arguments was precluded. My object was not to repeat a tale, but to affirm the identity of both forms of ownership, holding that copyrights and other rights of ownership come under the same definition. I am perfectly willing to adapt my definition of the right of ownership to yours by substituting the word "agreement" for "promise," arguing that unanimity, if such could exist, would be the most perfect agreement conceivable, even when it is of a tacit nature. But you appear to find fault with the term "supreme power." I purposely selected that term, believing that it is embraced in your definition. A unanimous agreement would indeed constitute a power more supreme than that of any conqueror of the world could be. Your rejoinder also conveys to me the impression that you consider a true definition of the right of ownership must exclude all relations inconsistent with equal freedom. With this I could not agree, since such a definition would imply a settlement of the dispute by postulate and preclude all discussion.

Believing that a further discussion was useless until the fundamental ground was agreed upon, I wrote the letter preparatory to a statement of my reasons for believing that copyrights are consistent with equal freedom, my intention to do so having been plainly indicated in the last sentence of my communication. Yet I am told that my use, or rather non-use, of the law of equal liberty is laughable in the extreme. I have indeed reason to feel that the departure from a scientific course of reasoning was on your side, not on mine.

I had proposed some axioms as a basis of controversy; but, since you refuse to recognize them without yourself making a counter-proposition, a dead-lock is inevitable. The law of equal freedom is not acceptable as a *fundamental* basis while opinions differ as to what constitutes equality of liberty. I, for one, fail to see any reason for withholding from labor expended in discovering that which had previously existed capable of being discovered a reasonable social recognition of ownership in the results of that labor, nor why that rule, if adopted, should find exception in case the subject of discovery should happen to be a gold mine.

HUGO BILGRAM.

PHILADELPHIA, FEBRUARY 27, 1891.

Negative Paternalism.

The Galveston "News" and United States Senator Reagan have been engaged lately in a sharp tilt upon the relation of government to finance. So interesting and significant is the discussion that Liberty reprints it in full. The first article is a "News" editorial in criticism of the senator, entitled "Paternal Dissent from a Semi-Paternal Scheme."

There was a flavor of paternalism about a passage in Senator Reagan's remarks before the members of the legislature at Austin, which has the more surprising effect as it falls close by an impressive protest against diverting the government from its task as designed by the founders to be, in the language of the senator, "a political government only." So far as recommending a policy is concerned, the senator was the embodiment of anti-paternal democracy. He uttered this impressive warning:

Many of our friends in the alliance want more money in circulation as a means of relieving their distress, and they want the adoption of the subtreasury plan under which they may deposit their farm produce and draw out money furnished by the government. However sincere the motives and convictions, and however honest and earnest the purposes, of those who advocate such measures, I will warn them that, whenever this government becomes a money lender, that very day you have adopted that which will wreck and ruin the American system of free government.

The report says that "Mr. Reagan then recounted the introduction of the land loan bill by Senator Stanford as a bid for the presidency, and proceeded to describe the practical workings of such a measure, under which the people would borrow on their lands, and, spending the money, would have to mortgage the lands for enough money to pay the government or turn their lands over to the government. Their homes would fall into the hands of the capitalists or into possession of the government." While the whole of that portion of the address referring to the alliance project is marked by the anti-paternal spirit, and the "News" has not to charge that Senator Reagan recommended any paternal action on that subject by the government, it is pretty plain from the reading of his stated objections to the working of the Stanford plan as he conceives it, that his apprehensions take the form of a paternal solicitude. When such solicitude is aroused in connection with public policy, the impulse to act in a political capacity from a paternal motive is strong in the present generation. Paternalism takes a negative and prohibitory form, as well as an affirmative form. There is abundant reason to suspect that the repressive, obstructive, prohibitory paternalism of the government has caused evils which, by leading to demands for relief, are the prompters to the affirmative paternalism of the alliance. Senator Reagan's apprehensions are a study. If the people who own lands could borrow from a liberal source of supply, they would borrow. They would be imprudent and get into debt. Their lands and houses would fall into the hands of their creditors. Indeed the senator's course of reasoning is sympathetically paternal. The irresistible inference, the only force of the argument, is that it is better for the people that there should not be ample facilities for them to alienate their property by mortgages and deeds of trust. It is a dangerous liberty, because the average man is speculative and imprudent. Perhaps so; but then, if liberty of business contract be thus dangerous and the people incompetent to spend or venture with what is their property, what becomes of a robust anti-paternalism? There will next be a commission wanted to go through the back yards and take away the clothes lines lest desperate debtors and fathers of families hang themselves. The homestead, it is assumed, is already secured. Reference to that might have been omitted. It is conceivable that with lower interest people would borrow on their lands on which they can now borrow, but on which they are afraid to borrow. It is conceivable that they would lose the borrowed money. If the argument is good in the sense in which it seems to have most bearing, the paternalistic reason for non-acceptance of Senator Stanford's plan is the triumphant reason. Such a plan as would furnish cheaper currency need not necessarily include government lending, but any lowering of the rate of interest emboldens borrowers; so the argument, if good, would be good against any liberty or science which would cheapen currency for the borrower able to give perfect security. It is truly curious that an anti-paternal statesman, immediately after making an argument against a paternal measure, should drop into a line of objections the keynote of which is that the people are not fit to be trusted with liberty to get into debt. Were the merits of paternalistic precaution being weighed, it would not be difficult to suggest some of the benefits to the laboring class from a more liberal supply of currency among property holders, and how the repressive paternalism exercised over the latter class lessens the offers of employment for the former, but it is not the purpose of this article to dive into the merits of the question. Its aim is simply to show the penetrating and pervading spirit by an instance of a paternalistic train of thought supplying the argument against a form of enlargement of the liberty and discretion of the citizen. There is surely risk in liberty. The incident of government participation is a different element. The risk and its avoidance by disallowing a facility seem to be the leading ideas at the close of the senator's argument. Were the senator arguing against government vineyards and wine shops, the "News" would join him so far as to agree that the government does not belong in productive business; but were he to add that the wine shops would only tempt men to excess, the "News" would point out that that is a paternalistic reason, and that it applies as well, if at all, against any non-governmental enterprise which cheapens the facility.

This criticism brought out the following reply from Senator Reagan:

I have just read, with some surprise, the editorial in the "News" of yesterday, headed "Paternal Dissent from a Semi-Paternal Scheme."

My remarks, imperfectly quoted in the "News," had for their object to assert that the founders of the federal government intended it for a political government only, and not for a paternal government which should assume the care and control of the pecuniary private interests of citizens.

Incidentally I mentioned that, when money should be borrowed on deposits of farm products, or on land mortgages, it would be for expenditure, with danger of foreclosure in case of mortgage; in which event the land would go either into the hands of capitalists or become the property of the government, and that it might and probably would result in the government becoming an extensive owner of real estate. I might have referred, but did not, to the present condition of Kansas, Nebraska, and other western states as to the result of mortgaging the lands and homes of citizens for loans of money.

The "News" chooses to construct upon that an argument to show that I was favoring paternalism and seeking by political authority to prevent persons from going into debt. That must be the meaning of the editorial, for it could not be paternalism for one citizen to go in debt to another. And I had no reference in my remarks to the case of one citizen going in debt to another. And certainly I said nothing indicating a desire to have the political authority interfere to prevent the contracting of debts between private persons.

The experience of several years has taught me not to ex-

pect fairness or justice at the hands of the "News." But I will be obliged if it will publish this brief reference to its editorial. JOHN H. REAGAN.

Under the head of "Sentimental and Defensive Paternalism" the "News" made the following rejoinder:

The letter of Senator Reagan, printed herewith, is a curious instance of incontinent denial and unconscious confession. The state of mind which can insensibly betray a naturally strong and maturely trained intellect into such self-contradiction would be a fit study for the psychologist, or possibly for the alienist. The "News," in an editorial of which the senator complains, did no more than to note that, in his last speech at Austin, he evinced a spirit of paternal solicitude, which would like to have the people guarded by some means against the peril of liberal opportunities for borrowing money on hypothecation of produce or realty. The irresistible inference, the "News" remarked, from his expression of apprehension on this score "is that it is better for the people that there should not be ample facilities for them to alienate their property by mortgage and deeds of trust." The senator is too widely informed to account it a monstrous anomaly or a fatal calamity for the federal government to be "an extensive owner of real estate." It commenced business more than a century ago as a colossal, a continental land owner. From that time it has continued to be the largest land owner between the two oceans. It has not been many years since the federal government owned and directly administered all the lands in Kansas, Nebraska, and throughout the west, except some parcels reserved for Indian tribes. So the danger apprehended by the senator in facilities, provided or proposed to be provided by legislation, for borrowing money and contracting debts on hypothecated securities representing produce or real estate, cannot be government ownership of the latter species of property. The danger must be a tendency to speculative, imprudent, and disastrous ventures in borrowing and mortgaging, into which farmers and others may be seduced by the provision of such facilities. And the danger, in the apprehension of the senator, cannot be confined to a proposed provision of such facilities by act of congress in the line of the Stanford bill or the alliance sub-treasury scheme, for he expressly refers, for illustration of the nature and gravity of the danger and the disaster with which it is fraught to "the present condition of Kansas, Nebraska, and other western States," a condition which could only be arrived at, as plainly implied, through facilities provided by the laws of Kansas, Nebraska, and other western States for "mortgaging the lands and homes of citizens for loans of money." As the "News" has heretofore indicated, there is positive paternalism and a negative paternalism. The latter seeks to guard the objects of its solicitude from committing acts hurtful to themselves by depriving them of instruments and avenues for the commission of such acts. Thus in a late prohibition campaign the senator proposed to protect his fellow-citizens from intemperance in drink by depriving them of access to intoxicating drinkables. Likewise, as he earnestly desires that the people should be somehow secured against ruinous intemperance in borrowing and mortgaging, he cannot be sentimentally in favor of legal facilities, either State or national, for a free indulgence in the borrowing and mortgaging habit. To suppose that he is at the same time for abating the habit and continuing provision by law for its indulgence without limit is an absurdity in terms and an incompatibility of ideas. Senator Reagan is welcome to amuse himself with trying to reconcile these irreconcilable conditions in sentiment and thought, if he pleases. He is also welcome to the pleasure of refurbishing and reiterating a historic and venerable fling of his at the "News" in the old castanean remark: "The experience of several years has taught me not to expect fairness or justice at the hands of the 'News.'" Alas! 'twas ever thus. Some persons are so mentally and morally constructed that they cannot refrain from impugning the motives of others in revenge for their own feebleness of argument.

A later editorial in the "News," headed "The Alliance and Prohibitory Financial Law," reiterated and emphasized its position and gave the Democratic party a significant warning.

The alliance is an offspring of certain oppressive conditions, and the alliance will sooner appreciate the truth of what the "News" has been saying regarding repressive prohibitory paternalism than will certain benevolent gentlemen in the old parties, who are paternal in their solicitude to prevent the people from hurting themselves in and by economic liberty. It is not likely that the alliance would ever have gone to the government for issues of currency if the government had left banking business as free as the boot-making and grocery business. The people either know how much credit and currency they need, or they are not competent to manage their own affairs. Prohibitory paternalism envelops everything in such a cloud that gentlemen like Senator Reagan are astonished to hear that which they never suspected, — that they are paternalists, as proved by the test of what they desire to forbid. At least, if they are willing to have bankers and farmers and other producers come together and arrange for the issue of all the secured currency which property owners desire to have manufactured and to pay for in a free market, they give no sign, but often intimate that the property owner will be ruined if the law allows him to pledge his property differently from now. How bitter a satire to the alliance farmer this is. He is free to borrow monopoly money on all but his homestead and pay ten per cent. The interest may eat him up. He learns that a different currency, merely representative of wealth, can be made and secured, and of course its cost is nothing like the interest which currency commands as now known, — a mere addendum to monopoly money. The borrower being an owner of wealth, currency to render that wealth fluid, mobile, is what he needs, and the proper price to pay is what it costs. No better taught, he looks to government. He is met even by democrats in the spirit of a sincere, ignorant, repressive paternalism, with something like this: "Dear boys, you would pledge your property and overdo the thing; make mistakes, and your property would pass into other hands." As much caution and advice as gentlemen in political life like, but the alliance is right as to all but the government being the warehouser and banker, and it is coming to this, that the democratic party must show whether it is in favor of liberty in finance. The owners of values would have long ago combined to supply themselves with currency which need not cost more than one per cent. and be perfectly good, but prohibitory law stands in the way. The alliance has come to demand through government what government has wrongly forbidden to come into being naturally. Wherever government strikes down trade, the demand will come that government itself do the thing needed if it will not let private parties do it. The "News" has used Senator Reagan as an illustration, but its criticism applies to the majority of other statesmen who consider themselves opposed to paternalism. It tells them candidly that they cannot grapple with the alliance until they come to a platform of economic liberty in the currency question as in all else. It is a necessary alternative. The people will have currency and will not pay for it a rental entirely disproportioned to its cost of manufacture and control when they furnish the wealth as security. There is nothing else essentially in the question, delicate and difficult as it may be, than security and management. What the democrats should be about as to the money question is to take reason of the alliance and give it an anti-paternal form and issue. Not that the alliance might at once accept free banking. Paternalism has brooded and reigned too long to abdicate at once from the minds of men. But this is the alternative, and the only alternative.

Proudhon, the Father of Anarchism.

HIS PERSONALITY AND HIS PHILOSOPHY.

[From Dr. S. Engländer's "Abolition of the State."*]

"In all times society felt the necessity of protecting its trade and industry against foreign importation. The power or function which protects home labor and secures for it its natural market is the customs authority. On this point I will in no wise give an opinion as to the morality or immorality, the use or otherwise, of the customs system. I take it as society gives it to me, and confine myself to investigating it from the standpoint of the constitution of powers. Later on, when we come from the political and social to the purely economic question, we shall attempt to arrive at a proper solution; we shall see if home produce can be protected without dues and supervision: in one word, if we can do without the customs authority.

"By the simple fact of its existence, the customs authority is a neutralized function; its origin, as its sphere of operation, excludes every idea of dismemberment. How comes it, then, that this function, which officially belongs to merchants and traders, which could exclusively be managed by chambers of commerce, is also dependent on the State? France supports an army of more than 40,000 men for the protection of her trade, toll-collectors all armed with sword and gun, and who also annually cost the country twenty-six millions. The object which this army has constantly in view is simultaneously to wage war upon smugglers and to collect a duty upon imported and exported goods of from 100 to 110 millions.

"But who can know better than the trade itself where and how much it requires protection, what productions require premiums? And as regards the customs service, are not the parties interested palpably justified in calculating the expense, and not the Government, in making out of it a source of emolument for its creatures, and in seeking in the differential duties levied a means to carry on its extravagance? As long as the customs administration remains in the hands of the authorities, so long will the protective system, on which subject as a system I pass no opinion, necessarily be defective. It will lack honesty and fairness. The tariffs imposed by the customs authorities are an exaction, and smuggling, in the words of the Honorable M. Blanqui, is a right and a duty.

"Besides the ministers of public worship, justice, war, of international trade or customs, Government cumulates other functions — namely, of agriculture and commerce, of public education, and, finally, to pay all these officials, the ministry of finance. Our alleged division of power is only a cumulation of all powers; our centralization only a sham.

"Does it not appear to you that the farmers, who are already organized by their common aim, could effect their centralization, and thoroughly watch over their common interests, without needing the hand of the State? That tradesmen, manufacturers, and the industrial classes generally, who in their chambers of commerce have an already existing groundwork, could equally organize a central administration, even at their own expense, without the interference of the Government, without looking for advantages from its arbitrary favor, or ruin from its inexperience, that they are not able to discuss their affairs in general assemblies, to enter into association with other bodies, and to pass all requisite resolutions without the *visa* of the President of the Republic? That they could confer upon one of themselves the task of carrying out their decisions, to one of their equals, to one elected by themselves, who should thus be a Minister?

"The Public Works, which concern all, whether connected with agriculture, industry, or trade, departments or parishes, might be divided among the local and central administrations interested, and no longer form monopolizing official systems, as do now the army and the customs — a special corporation exclusively embodied in the State — a corporation which has everything, hereditary privilege and Ministry, in order that the State may juggle away mines, canals, and railways, may gamble in stocks and shares, grant concessions to good friends for 99 years, give away contracts for roads, bridges, harbors, dykes, excavations, sluices, dredgings, etc., to a legion of jobbers, cheats, and swindlers, who live upon the property of other people, on the hard earnings of mechanics and day-laborers, on the stupidity of the State?

"Do you not believe that public education would be as accessible and as well conducted, that the selection of the teachers, professors, rectors, and inspectors would be as happy, that the system of public instruction would be as complete, if the communal and general councils were convoked to transfer education to the teachers, while the university had only to give them their diplomas, if, as in the military system, length of service in the lower grades were a condition of advancement, if every dignitary of the university had first to perform the duties of an elementary teacher? Do you believe that this thoroughly democratic arrangement of the discipline of the schools would be detrimental to the morality of education, to the dignity of instruction, or the peace of families? And as the nerve of every administration is money, and as the budget is for the country, not the country for the budget; as the taxes must every year be voted by the popular representatives; as this is the inalienable right of a nation under a monarchy as under a republic; as expenditure and revenue must both be considered by the country before the Government can use them; do you not see that the consequence of this financial initiative, specially allotted to the citizens, must be that the ministry of finance — in fact, the entire fiscal organization — belongs to the country and not to the prince? That it directly belongs to those who pay, and not to those who consume the budget? That far less misuse and waste of the State funds would appear if the State had as little power of disposal over the public monies as over public worship, justice, the army, the customs, public instruction, and public works?

"After what I have already adduced, I will not quote more examples; the continuation of the list were easy, and the distinction between centralization and cumulation, between separation of the legislative functions and separation of the two abstractions, which, absurdly enough, are called the legislative and executive powers, would be comprehended, and the difference between administration and government would be finally understood.

"Do you not believe that, with this strictly democratic system of unity, more strictness in the expenditure, punctuality of service, responsibility of officials, more courtesy, less fawning and fewer quarrels, in one word, less disorder, would prevail? Do you believe that reforms would then appear so difficult? That the influence of the authorities would falsify the decisions of the citizens, that we should not be a hundred times less governed, but our affairs a hundred times better administered?

"It was held that to re-establish national unity all the powers of the State must be placed in the hands of one single authority. But as it was soon perceived that this led up to despotism, the next idea was that a remedy could be found in a dualism of power. As if no other means existed to prevent a conflict between the Government and the people than a conflict between the Government and the Government!

"To achieve unity in a nation, centralization in religious, judicial, military, agricultural, trade, commercial, and financial matters, is requisite, — in one word, in all institutions and offices. Centralization must ascend from the lowest to the highest, from the outside to the centre. All functions must be independent, and each must govern itself.

"Place the heads of these various administrations together, and you have your council of ministers, your executive power, which can dispense with the council of State. Place over all this a grand jury directly appointed by the country, legislature, or national assembly, empowered, not to appoint

*Concluded from No. 181.

ministers, — they have been elected by the country, — but to examine accounts, pass laws, draw up the budget, arrange differences between the various departments, — in short, to see to everything appertaining to the Ministry of the Interior, to which the entire Government is reduced, — and you will then have a system of centralization, stronger, more extended, and with far more responsibility, the more sharply the separation of the powers is defined. You have at one and the same time a political and a social constitution. Then would Government, State, or Power, whatever we may call it, be reduced to an equitable standard, with no legislative or executive functions, but be simply a spectator in the public life like the Attorney-General in legal proceedings. It would only serve to interpret the meaning of the laws, to reconcile existing contradictions, and exercise the necessary police functions.

"Thus would Government be nothing more than the mouthpiece of society, the sentinel of the people. Or rather, no government at all would exist — order would have emanated from Anarchy. Then you would have liberty of the citizen, truthfulness in the institutions, purity of universal suffrage, blameless administration, impartial justice, patriotism of bayonets, overthrow of parties, the united endeavor of the universal will. Your society would be organized, live, advance, think, speak, act like one man, and the reason would be because it would no longer be represented by one man, because in it, as in every organized and living being, as in the single idea of Pascal, the centre is everywhere, the circumference nowhere.

"Our democratic traditions, our revolutionary tendencies, our need for centralization and unity, our love of liberty and equality, and the purely economic if badly employed principle of all our constitutions, lead us irresistibly to the anti-governmental constitution.

"I should have liked to make the Constituent Assembly understand this, had they been in a country to hear anything but commonplaces, had they not, in their blind prejudice against every new idea, in their dishonest provocations of the Socialists, always held the opinion, 'Dare to convince me' . . . Assemblies, like nations, learn only by misfortune. We have not yet suffered enough; we have not been sufficiently chastised for our monarchical servility and our rage for Government that we should soon love liberty and order."

The movement of the working classes reflected more and more the influence of Proudhon's ideas as the workmen felt the sharp points and asperities of the State.

After the June revolution a great change took place in the tendencies of the people of Paris. The influence of Louis Blanc yielded to that of Proudhon. Proudhon told the workmen neither to accept nor demand anything from the State. The experience which the workmen gained in the debate on the right to labor made them regard the State as something more and more hostile to their interests. The union of all workmen's associations proved that the associations thoroughly understood that the solution of the social problem must come from below and not from above. This attempt at union miscarried, but the influence of Proudhon's ideas on the working class continued. He gave to their subsequent endeavors another direction, and separated the workmen's associations from all communistic theories, and from all ideas of revolutionary dictatorship.

Germany's Experiment.

[Kate Field's Washington.]

The latest news from Germany indicates that the compulsory insurance law is about the most unpopular piece of legislation put upon the statute-book in recent years. The moral of the situation reminds one of the conclusion reached by the hero in "Mr. Pettito's Water Store" — that people don't care to be benefited. The law requires the working classes to deposit a certain percentage of their earnings each week in the hands of the government, to be kept as a provision against poverty in their old age. The idea of the authors and promoters of the scheme is that most of the discontent, the unrest, the revolutionary tendencies of the working-people, are due to their improvidence. "Now," says the government, "if you are discontented because you are imprudent, you must not be imprudent any more; and if you won't save your money of your own accord, we'll make you save it." Just there is the rub. It is not in human nature to enjoy having virtue forced upon one. Even people who are entirely willing to be punished when they are bad, do not care to be compelled to be good. They don't want to be coerced into letting liquor alone, or worshipping God in a certain way, or saving their money, or doing anything else which involves a question of personal morals. And Germany may discover, before very long, that the means she had adopted for the suppression of revolutionary sentiments among the industrial classes is one of the most fertile breeders of the evil it aims to abolish.

He Must Have It, All the Same.

To the Editor of Liberty:

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Respectfully, JAMES H. JACK.

DENVER, COLORADO, APRIL 23, 1891.

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The undersigned has purchased from the heirs of the late Lysander Spooner all his printed pamphlets and unpublished manuscripts, and proposes to sell the former to obtain means for the publication of the latter. The list given below includes all of Mr. Spooner's works, with the exception of five or six which are entirely out of print. Of some there are but three or four copies left, and there are stereotype plates of but few. Some may never be reprinted. Those persons who apply first will be served first. The pamphlets are catalogued below in an order corresponding closely to that of the dates of publication. BENJ. R. TUCKER.

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